**Basics of Article Two of the Constitution**

**The Executive Branch**

The executive (law execution and enforcement) power in the United States is the hands of a President of the United States.

**Specifics**

* Must be at least 35 years old and is up for re-election every 4 years.
* Must be a natural born United States citizen (not an immigrant to the country)
* Originally could serve as many terms as wanted (Now, may only serve two terms, as of the 22nd Amendment ratified in 1951)
* Elected by a group called the Electoral College, which are a group of people chosen to actually elect the President
* The Vice-President must meet all of these qualifications as well

**Some Powers and Duties of the President**

* Commander-in-Chief of the armed forces
* May make treaties with foreign countries, but those must be approved by two-thirds (2/3) of the Senate
* May appoint ambassadors, federal judges, and official advisors, but these people must be approved by a simple majority (50% + 1 vote) of the Senate
* Must “from time to time” give Congress a “State of the Union.” This has turned into an annual speech (usually given at the end of January), but it has not always been so. Thomas Jefferson began a tradition of giving the responsibility for delivering the address to a clerk that lasted until 1913.

**Basics of Article Three of the Constitution**

**The Judicial Branch**

The judiciary (law interpreting) power in the United States is the hands of one Supreme Court and any number of inferior courts as Congress may decide.

**Specifics**

* Appointed to positions by the President with the approval of the Senate
* Hold positions for terms of good behavior
* Extends to all cases in “Law and Equity” that come about because of the Constitution

**Jurisdiction**

* In cases involving ambassadors, ministers, and other public officials, the Supreme Court has “original jurisdiction.” This means that the Supreme Court can hear the case for the first time before it has been heard anywhere else. **This rarely happens.**
* In all other cases, the Supreme Court has “appellate jurisdiction.” This means that they can only hear the case when one side in the case appeals the decision from a lower court. **This is the usual way in which the Supreme Court hears cases.**